# WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, APRIL 18, 1850.

WHOLE NO. 172.

National Era is Published Weekly, on Seventh Street, opposite Odd Fellows' Hall.

TERMS. Two dollars per annum, payable in advance.

Advertisements not exceeding ten lines inserted three times for one dollar; every subsequent inser-

All communications to the Era, whether on business of the paper or for publication, should be addressed to G. Balley, Washington, D. C.

BUELL & BLANCHARD, PRINTERS, Sixth street, a few doors south of Pennsylvania avenue.

THE NATIONAL ERA.

WASHINGTON, APRIL 15, 1850.

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THE MOTHER-IN-LAW.

A STORY OF THE ISLAND ESTATE.

BY MRS. EMMA D. R. SOUTHWORTH.

BOOK SECOND.

V-CONTINUED.

Very glad of any commission that would bring him in company with Zoe, who by her father's command had shunned him entirely for the last two months, Brutus threw himself upon his horse, rode rapidly down the mountain side, and entered the glen at the bottom of which the Dovecote lay. Winding down the circuitous path, he came in front of the cottage, as it rested against

and many of them torn up by the roots, and lay in bunches and piles around. The cottage windows were bare of blinds, and he saw through the open door that the pretty carpet was gone from the floor. On one side of the house shoot Zoe, clasping two white Bantam chiefers to her cheeks of the best of the cheeks of the last Near her stood the old schoolmaster, bent to keep company on the road. At last, without nearly double with age, infirmity, or sorrow.

The fifteenth of April? 'I thought master?' 'The fifteenth of April?' 'I thought Twenty years seemed to have passed over his hoary head since Brutus had last met him. He was feebly trying to tie the legs of chickens, that he dropped into a hamper at his feet, already half full of poultry. He turned tremblingly around; that Zoe was found on my porch. 'Because,' she realised 'something strange happened in the same happened i as he saw Brutus, and asked, in a querulous

"What do you come here for, sir? Didn't l

and gloves-my herbs and flowers. Well, I was sorry, but I did not cry for them, because they were dead things—but now! Oh now! he is tying my poor dear hens and chickens, to take them to at all hours of the night to travel through the my poor dear hens and chickens, to take them to market to-morrow. Look! See! Poor dear Spec-most lonesomest places, I never seen nothink more the most lonesomest places, I never seen nothink more the coming up of Zoe arrested worser than myself—so I wan't afeard. So me worser than myself—so I wan't afeard. So me and Jinny—not this Jinny I'm a riding of now, and Jinny—not this Jinny and me come along of the lone of the lone of the lone of the coming up of Zoe arrested their conversation.

By nightfall they were all at the Lair. The lone of the light to travel. The lone of the light to travel the coming up of Zoe arrested their conversation.

By nightfall they were all at the Lair. The light to travel the coming up of Zoe arrested their conversation. drop-and"-here choking sobs convulsed the child's bosom, as she hugged her white Bantams

What are you sobbing for, you miserable little wretch? Save your tears, you'll have a use for them! Hand me the chickens here; and if you weep, weep for yourself. I must, must make up two hundred dollars, and I have not got fifty yet!" and the old man held out his trembling and

claw-like fingers for the Bantams. "Give them up, Zoe, my darling, I will save them-save them all-not a feather of your pets shall be ruffled."

After having showered tears and kisses upo them, Zoe harded the Bantams to the old man. "Say, sir!" exclaimed Brutus, touching the old man's elbow, to arrest his attention, for the schoolmaster in his occupation had apparently forgotten him; "say, sir!"

"Well! you here yet? Didn't I tell you to

"We have got a sick young man up to our house, and the doctor has ordered him to eat chickens. I want to buy a dozen." "Eh? yes! well! what? these are good chick

ens, and must bring a good price; and since it is for a sick man, and since he is obliged to take them-say a dollar a pair!" "Oh, father !" exclaimed Zoe-

"Never mind! never mind! Zoe, dear, I'm no Jew. That is it, sir! I'll take as many as you will let me have at that price."

"Take them all." Agreed. Well, my good sir, there is another thing - the doctor, besides ordering this rich young man to eat chickens, has ordered him to divert his mind by learning Greek lessons."

"Eb! well ?" " And we want to engage a teacher for him in the house?

"Eh! well! yes! what then?" "We were thinking of you, sir."

"Ah, yes, to be sure! But then as it is to save his life-it is valuable, and must be liberally compensated, this private tultion!"

"Certainly, sir; he is a wealthy Englishman and can afford it; in the time of his illness, I am his banker, and I can secure it to you," said Brutus, burdening his conscience with lie after lie.

Zoe, go pack up Herodotus, Æschylus, Euripides, and Sophocles; go! When is it that you want me to come, sir ? "

"To-night, sir, to be ready to commence in th "Well, well! Yes, but what am I to do with

Zoe ? 22 "Sir, my sister, you know, is a wild girl : she does not know how to prepare delicate dishes for an invalid, and all our negro women have run away, and so my sister told me to entreat her friend Zoe to come to the Lair, and give her some

directions in these matters." "Yes, but Zoe ought to be paid! No, she shall not, either! I can't degrade Zoe." And the old

man burst into tears. "Ob, what a wreck !" muttered Brutus, looking down on the gray head, bowed upon the withered

At last he looked up imploringly to the young man's face, and said-

"Brutus, I want to sell the Dovecote; how much will you give me for it?"

"But I do not want to buy it, sir." "You don't? Come, I will sell it to you cheap. I must have money for Zoe's sake."

"For Zoe's sake, sir? I love Zoe; I wish to marry Zoe; I will devote my life to her happiness; consent to our marriage, and her future is secur-

"Brutus, you love her." "God knows it!"

" Only her?" " Only her, of all womankind."

"Brutus, you cannot marry her!"

"You have said so before, sir, but that does no

"Brutus, swear that you will not divulge what I tell you."

"I swear it, sir."

" ZOE IS A BLAVE!" Brutus Lion recled as if struck by a canno

"Great God, mir!"

" And there are some in this neighborhood that

"Sir! sir! how did this come to your knowledge 7" Two months ago, through an old midwife;

yesterday, through Mrs. Armstrong." "Through Mrs. Armstrong!" "Yes, yes; she sent for me, and told me, advis-

ing me to get the child out of the State; but lord, poor baby, where can I send her, alone and unprotected ?"

"And who is her owner?" Major Somerville. "And who are her parents ?"

"His slaves, Harriet and George." "Impossible!"

"TRUE, I tell you."

"But the particulars! for God's sake, give me the particulars!" "Well then this is it : You remember after

my Greek class ? "

"How I came home one ev mine, and found no one here but you, with Zoe?" "Yes, yes! And I remember your agitation!" "Well, I might be agitated"—

"Well! well!"
"I had been dining with Major Somerville, and sat with him smoking our pipes until the sun got low—very low. Then I happened to think of my Greek class, and I started to come home. I paced down the steep of the Crags, and turned into the deep dell that lies between my old schoolhouse hill and the river. At the bottom of this glen the woods are very thick, the trees very tall, and their branches meeting over head, together with the very high hills around and behind them,

" Yes-well! She was riding slowly along on her mule. Oh! she's an ugly horror, m re hideous than her niece Kate"-

The path was so universitant I could not pass Zoe, clasping two white Bantam chickens to her her. She turned at the sound of my horse's feet,

replied, 'something strange happened to me in this glen, upon that very night.' 'What was it, then?' I asked. "Now, my son Brutus, I will give you the

"Now, my son Brutus, I will give you the story in her own words:

"I will you to keep away from here? That I wouldn't have you here? It is very strange that you will persist in coming where you are not wanted."

"Oh Brutus!" wept Zoe, coming close to his side, "he has lost his mind—he who was so generous! he thinks of nothing but money. He has carried to town-market all my things, and sold them—my new carpets and quilts—my new socks and cloves—my herbs and flowers. Well, I was for home, atween eleven and twelve o'clock. seen the lady and the child comfortable, I sets off for home, atween eleven and twelve o'clock. I wan't afeard, for I never memorize seeing nothink more worser than myself? 'Likely not,'

slow like, down this deep, narrow path, where you see it is dark enough in the daytime, but in a cloudy midnight it is the most darkest place as ever was here tell on! Well, Jinny and me, we was a coming through this black hollow, when we got into the midst of the blackness. Jinny, she started, driv' her feet plump into the ground, and stood stock still! I seen nothink in the dark, and sure as I'm a livin' sinner, master, I thought Jinny seen a sperrit! Now, I ain't afeard of nothink in the brute form, nor yet in the human nothink in the Grute form, nor yet in the animal form, but I must say as how I'm sfeard o' sperrits, specially black ones. I bursted all over in perspiration, just as if I had been drinking of a sweat and I said, 'In the name off the angels, and off the saints, and off the devils, what do you want?' 'Are you Granny Jumper?' says a gruff voice, says it. Says I, 'Yes.' 'Well, you're wanted to

the saints, and off the devils, what do you want?

'Are you Granny Jumper?' says a gruff voice, says it. Says I, 'Yes.' 'Well, you're wanted to go to a lady. I have been at your house to look for you, and come from there to meet you, as the gal said you'd sure to be coming home.' Then he—it was a he—comes up close to me and says, says he, 'Granny, this is a secret business?' 'I'm used to sich,' says I. 'A young lady who has been privately married'—— 'Without being beholden to the parson,' says I. 'You are at fault; but this must be kept a secret, and you shall be paid well,' says he. 'But, Granny,' says he, 'you must be blindfolded' 'I won't,' said I. 'Granny, do you know a guinea when you feel it?' 'Yes,' says I. 'Here are two. Suffer me to blindfold you and you shall have five more when the affair is over.' 'Well,' thinks I, 'the blessed fool may blindfold me, but it will go hard if I don't know the road he's a takin' of me' So I let the man blindfold me, and then he led my mule down that path and made a circle to fool me, and took me by another path straight up the Crags. I kept the general route well enough! Then we stops—dogs barks—he speaks.

enough! Then we stops—dogs barks—he speaks
to them and they hushes. Then he helps me
down, and takes my arm and draws it through
hisen. Well, when I was so close to him I knows he was not one of my own color; still I never let on. He takes me through a door, and through a room, and through another door, and up a flight of stairs on the left hand, and into a room on the right. Here he took the bandage from my eyes, and he might's well have left it on. The room was rayther darkish. He led me up to a bed as was curtained. Well, there was no light brought into the room until jist after the babe was born, and even then I did not see the mother's face, for she concealed it. The woman that brought the light in had her face muffled up in a shawl, and light in had her face muffled up in a shaw!, and she took the babe and carried it out, with the light also. And then, in the dark, came the same man, and blindfolding me put five guineas in my hand, and took me away. Well, he took me by still another road, and left me in the middle of the same glen where he had stopped me. Well, it was very nigh on to dawn when I got home. I was younger and stronger then than I am now, and more usen to lose my rest; so instead of going to bed at the dawn of day, I makes myself a strong cup of coffee, and goes across the river to pick horse-mint afore the dew was off. You know there spothink like that grows on this barren side. Well, the sun wasn't nothink nigh up ren side. Well, the sun wasn't nothink nigh up when I passes close to the Dove-cote. I seen a woman going towards it with a somethink in her arms. The woman didn't see me. I stoops down

where I was a gathering of the horse-mint, and watches her. She lays down her bundle on the porch, and, as she turned around to come away, I seen it was Harriet, Major Somerville's quadroon 'oman. She looked ill and ghastly, and I know'd how it was her own child she had laid there! And I guessed her motive. I know'd how she and her ole man had been a tryin' to save money to buy the freedom of their first child, Anna, and I memorize of hearing her say that she never

I memorize of hearing her say that she never would bring another child into the world to be a slave, and I knew that she had concealed the birth of this child, and laid it at your door, that it might be fotch up as a free white child!"
"Did you speak to Harriet when she turned

from my cottage gate ?" anything about it."
"Again-why?"

"La master, keeping of things to myself comes sort o' nat'rel to me." "Why, then, do you tell me now?"
"Why, then, do you tell me now?"
"Why, master, you see for a reason. I am getting old, and a losing of my custom, and a wantin' of money, and it come to me as if I let on any think about the girl to old Major Somerville's

think about the girl to old Major Somerville's creditors, how they might pay me some'at smart for tellia' all about it; some'at to keep me in my old days—but I thought how I wouldn't like to 'sturb you, as you like the little gall, if you could manage yourself to make me up a little something to keep me in my old days."

"In a word, Brutes, the old crone which to extert money from me."

"I hope you did not pay her to keep the secret, sir."

"I could not, Brutus. I did not even give her the least encouragement to hope that I would." "I am glad of it, sir. This whole story sounds to me very much like an imposition."

But it is not."

"Not, sir ?"
"Not! Listen, Brutus. Within a week, this old woman has divulged the secret."

"How, sir?"
"Yes, to Major Somerville's largest creditor!" " Oh Heaven !"

"Yesterday morning, Mrs. Armstrong sent for me. I went to her; she was in her bed-room, looking very ill, propped up with pillows in her easy chair. She has changed very much since her last visit to the Isle of Rays. 'I have sent her last visit to the Isle of Rays. 'I have sent for you, sir,' she said, 'upon the most important business—your adopted daughter, Zoe, sir. Are you advised of her origin?' I could not reply. I grew giddy, and turned pale, and she saw it. 'Sit down, sir, she said—(she had not invited me to do so before). 'I see, sir, that you know or suspect something of this girl's birth. May I inquire how long it has been since you have known or suspected this?' 'Madam, I know nothing?'

moves my sympathy, because I think it is not such a misfortune to grow old and die. "Anna no longer shares my love. I wonder at the habitual resignation, and cannot understand it. A river of ice seems to have frozen between us. "I cannot pray or believe as once, for hard thoughts of Providence come between my prayer and his throne.

"Yes! my life of love, of hope, and faith, is gone. I am dead—dead. Oh! Lord, complete

nothing "Very well, sir! I do not insist upon your committing yourself, by rash words; but let me tell you, sir, that I know all; and that I have sent for this conscious, living death!" you from the kindest motives to advise you to send this girl away from the State. She is the second daughter of George and Harriet, two slaves of Major Somervike. They dishonestly concealed her birth, to secure her education and freedom. This secret cannot be kept forever. I have lately learned it, as others will. The creditors of Major Somervike and the second daughter of George and Harriet, two of Riley.

"Give me life, or death! Any life—a life of anguish rather than this conscious death!"

It seemed as if her wild prayer had been heard any answered. Anna entered the room rule and itors of Major Somerville are growing impatient. They will not molest him now—but he is in extreme age. If anything were to happen to him, they would swoop down upon his property, and sweep it all away; and though, as Major Somerville's largest creditor, my claims are just, and I promise to forego them, yet others will not, or cannot afford to be so merciful. Therefore, I advise you to get your major out of the State, with vise you to get your protege out of the State, with the pack rocks. I browing number from his norse, he opened the little wicker gate, and here a sad sight met his view.

The flowers in the garden had all been plucked, and many of them torn up by the roots, and lav

"Well, Brutus, what do you think of this

"Sir, I am confused-amazed; but I think that when the devil or Mrs. Armstrong grows philan-thropic, something is to be suspecied, and enough be on their guard," mouned Brutus, in a tone of

"And I, Brutus." My braid rees, somewither my memory fails. I am unable to fix my attenlion upon anything. This child, Brutus! I loved

her as my own !" Ah, sir !" heavily sighed Brutus. "You do not know all she was to me!"
"Oh, sir! yes, I do."

She was the life of my heart." Oh Heaven, sir! of mine too!

"I called her Zoe-life!" "God have mercy on us!"
"I taught her GREEK!"

"God have mercy on us!" again prayed Bru-tus, passionately clasping his hands, "Brutus!"

"You can never marry her."

"Oh! I know it," groaned the young man.
"Therefore, Brutus, there must be no more "Oh! no, no, sir!" sighed the Lion, dropping his shaggy head upon his hands.

"If I take her to the Lair, where indeed she

will be safer, in some respects, you will regard "Yes, sir, oh yes! But tell me-does she-

no, she does not this unfortunate child-suspect her real position?"
"Ah, no! I have not had the courage to tell

her yet"—
At this moment the coming up of Zoe arrested old man, as is frequently the case with the ex-tremely aged, had, after this spasmodic clearing up of his intellects, relapsed into the confused, sastracted condition of mind that had af late

marked him.
Immediately on reaching the Lair, Brutus a fire lighted in a musty old study, filled with mouldy books, and conducting the schoolmaster there, told him that that opened into a sleeping-room, and that they were to be his apartments. Here, seated at a wood fire, the old man fell into In the old stone kitchen below, little Zoe busied

herself in making a whey for the patient, while Brutus walked moodily up and down the floor. Gertrude remained at the bedside of her invalid. Gertrude remained at the bedside of her invalid. She did not even join the schoolmaster. Brutus, and Zoe, at supper; but after supper, she came down, and sent Zoe up to watch, while she took some refreshments. The schoolmaster had retired again to the musty study. Gertrude took a seat near the window, and while she ate some strawberries, she talked to Brutus.

"How is your patient, Gertrude?" he asked.

"Feverish, restless, tumbling about his bed, and worrying himself to death about some State papers that must be returned to Washington."

pers that must be returned to Washington."
"Where are they now?"

"In his coat pocket."
"Send them to the post-office."

"He will not trust them to our uncertain country mails; besides, he knows that this is not mail day, and it is of the utmost importance that these papers be in the Minister's hands the day after to-morrow. Unless his mind can be set at rest to-morrow. Unless his mind can be set at rest upon this subject, he will be excited into high fever, perhaps delirium. The physician, who left him just as you returned, says so. I was about to ask you, Brutus, if you could not possibly go to Washington with these papers. Earthquake will take you there and back in two days. Oh! Brutus, you would so much oblige me if you would, and it might be the saving of the young man's life."

Brutus mused. Commended to be set at rest upon the set of the saving of the young man's life."

Brutus mused-Gertrude coaxed. It seemed not unpleasant to Brutus to get away, if possible, from torturing regrets. Nothing could happen, or at least was likely to happen, to Zoe, in so

short a space as two days.

"Brutus, I never asked a favor of you before, in my life, and I beg one of you now." "I will go, Gertrude."
Indeed, both brother and sister were wonder-

fully subdued and softened—the one by pity—the other by sorrow—both by love. In order to lose no time, Brutus arose before dawn and called Gertrude, who had watched by the wounded man's couch all night. Taking Gertrude down into the dark and silent hall, he there related to her the secret history revealed by the schoolmaster, at which Gertrude expressed no surprise at all; on the contrary, she replied, "I suspected it all along."
"You did, Gertrude! But from what circum-

"I can scarcely tell you! From the vague things, that yet impressed me strongly; things so intangible that they would vanish when would try and seize and prove them. And, more-over, what I feel most certainly, is, that Mrs. Arm-strong is darkly, and perhops criminally, implicated in this topic house.

"Your reasons? Your reasons?" "I cannot give any that you would not set down as fanciful and absurd. If I were to tell down as fanciful and absurd. If I were to tell you, for instance, only of certain looks, tones, and gestures, upon certain occasions—starts and pallors, upon the naming of certain subjects—you would consider them fantastical, as I do when I really examine them; yet I feel in my inmost heart that Mrs. Armstrong is criminally implicated in this affair! For, sometimes, by little hints capable of a double meaning, I frighten her into the idea that I know something, when I know nothing!" Brutus groaned deeply, and then

"Gertrude! old Major Somerville has threatened with an apoplectic stroke. It is scarcely likely that anything should happen be-fore my return; but if it should chance that the old man is stricken down-his creditors only wait his death, to swoop down upon his property— in a word, Gertrude, if the sheriff should attach Zoe as his property, you will defend her?"
"With my life! Come, you know me!"
"You will not permit the constable to take

"TAKE HER! Glory! We shall take the constables! I snuff the battle afar off!"

DEATH AT THE CRAGS. No-pleasures, hopes, affections gone, The wretch may bear and yet live on. Lize things within the cold rock found Alive, when all's congesi'd around. But there's a blank repose in this, A calm stagnation that were blics,

"Why is this? Why do I walk abo

yes, were the grave closed over me, I could not be more completely dead. And it would be better so, for then I should not be conscious as I am now. Death in the grave! why, that is not bad. The unconscious body lies there, and the freed spirit revels in liberty and space. Death in the grave! that were a boon! But it is this body that is a

"I have no strength of heart to love, believe, or hope—none! How cold and hard I grow. My poor old grandfather, old, sick, and poor, no longer moves my sympathy, because I think it is not such a misfortune to grow old and die.

"Yes! my life of love, of hope, and faith, is gone. I am dead—dead. Oh! Lord, complete

this conscious, living death!"
Such were the half-crary monnings of Susan

and answered. Anna entered the room, pale and trembling. Susan turned and looked at her with languid surprise. Your grandfather-Miss Susan!"

"In a fit! dying!"
"Oh! God, forgive me and spare him!" ex claimed the conscience-stricken girl, suddenly thinking remorsefully of her repinings a moment before. She hurried from the room wildly—paused in the hall, and asked hastily, "Where is

" What of him ?"

In his own room, Miss Susan." "Have you sent for the doctor?"
"My father has gone, Miss Susan."
"Who is with him?" she inquired, still hurry-

My mother, Miss Susan." "Who found him?"
"I 352, Miss Susan. I went to call him down to dinner, and found him on the floor in a fit." "On the floor in a fit! Oh, my God! we

I do not think so, Miss Susan " He ought never to have been left alone a moment! Oh, Anna, not a moment! Oh, Anna who knows how long he suffered before you found

Not five minutes, Miss Susan. He had been reading the Bible all the morning, while you were at church and until you came home. When he saw you go up to your room to put off your bonnet, he went into the yard and plucked a bunch of wild eglantine roses, and told me to put them in water and set them on the table for you, and to call him to dinner when you came down and then he went to his room, and in five min utes, or less time, I found him in a fit." The end of this rapid conversation brought

them to the bedside of the invalid. Tears were streaming from the eyes of Susan as she gazed at the convulsed form and features of the old man Even while she gazed, a violent spasm agitated the poor old frame. "Oh, what can we do for him?" she sobbed.
"Grandfather! dear grandfather! can't you speak

"Hush, Miss Susan! He is past that-long

"Oh! what can we do for him?"
"Nothing, Miss Susan, 'till the doctor come

This is apoplexy."

"Apoplexy! Oh Heaven!"

"Calm yourself, Miss Susan."

me! just look at me!" sobbed Susan, seeking to fix the glance of the rolling eyes. But there was and again, the old, withered hand that hung helplessly over the quilt, and gave herself up to a passion of sobs. "Grandfather! Oh, I would give the best years of my life for one single word, for one single glance of recognition! This poor hand! its last act was for me! Ingrate! oh, ingrate that I was! " Again a violent fit of sobbing choked her utterance. " His last words to bing choked her utterance. "His last words to me were, 'God love you, baby!' just as we set out for church, and his last words were, 'put these roses in water for Susan.' 'Ingrate! oh, ingrate, that I was!'" A spasm again convulsed the dying man. "Grandfather, oh, grandfather! if I could change places with you, God knows I would the state of the could change places with you.

do it." A moan from the breast of the old man—a short, rasping respiration, a quick, violent spasm, and all was still.

"He is at rest, Miss Susan," said Harriet. Susan started to her feet—gazed one moment on the stiffening face; a mist passed before her eyes, her head swam, her limbs failed, and she fell. Anna caught her, placed a cup of water to her lips, and drew her from the room—drew her to her own chamber, where Susan fell upon the bed and turned upon her face, extending her arms in an attitude of utter and helpless abandonment. And there she lay all day, and there she lay all right without a change of position.

night, without a change of position.

Anna returned to the death-chamber to assist her mother. The doctor had just come—ten minutes too late.
Major Somerville died on Sunday afternoon

On Tuesday, at the very hour that Brutus Lion was setting out for the metropolis, without having heard of what had happened at the Crags, ten miles off, they were making preparations for the funeral. The funeral took place on Tuesday afternoon

TO BE CONTINUED.

## For the National Era. OPINION OF CHIEF JUSTICE JAY.

MR. EDITOR : The following letter, containing the opinion of John Jay, concerning the constitu-tional power of Congress to prohibit the extension tional power of Congress to prohibit the extension of slavery, I find in a pamphlet dated 1819, annexed to the speeches in favor of imposing the slavery restriction upon Missouri, by Rufus King, in the Senate, and Messrs. Taylor and Talmadge of New York, in the House. I do not know but it may have been often published before, but I have never seen it elsewhere, and you may perhaus like to insert it in your paper.

haps like to insert it in your paper,
GEORGE H. WITHERBEE.

Bedford, Westcheste Co., N. Y.,
November 17, 1819.

Dear Sir: I have received the cony of a circular letter, which, as chairman of the committee appointed by the late public meeting at Trenton, respecting slavery, you was pleased to direct to me on the 5th instant.

Little can be added to what has been said and witten on the arbient of slavery. I common in the

written on the sudject of slavery. I concur in the opinion that it ought not to be introduced nor permitted in any of the new States, and that it ought to be gradually diminished, and finally abolished in all of them.

To me, the constitutional authority of the Conmitted in the constitutional authority of the Congress to prohibit the migration and importation of slaves into any of the States, does not appear

questionable.

The first article of the Constitution specifies the legislative powers committed to the Congress. The 9th section of that article has these words:

The 9sh section of that article has these words:

"The migration or importation of such persons as any of the now existing States shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the year 1808, but a tax or duty may be imposed on such importation, not exceeding ten dollars for each person."

I understand the sense and meaning of this clause to be, that the power of the Congress, although competent to prohibit such migration and importation, was not to be exercised with respect to the then existing States (and them only) until the year 1808, but the Congress were at liberty to make such prohibition as to any new State which might in the mean time be established. And, further, that from and after that period, they were authorized to make such prohibition as to all the States, whether new or old.

they were authorized to make such prohibition as to all the States, whether new or old.

It will, I presume, be admitted, that slaves were the persons intended. The word slaves was avoided, probably on account of the existing toleration of slavery, and its discordancy with the principles of the Revolution, and from a consciousness of its being repugnant to the following positions in the Declaration of Independence: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created count; that they are endowed by men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights

Be pleased to assure the committee of my best wishes for their success, and permit me to assure you of the esteem and regard with which I am, dear sir, your faithful and obedient servant. JOHN JAY.

The Honorable Elias Boudinot.

### For the National Era. THE CHILD AT THE FOUNTAIN.

By the side of a sparkling Fountain A lovely infant stood, Who a golden bowl was holding In a careless, merry mood-Dip ing it oft in the waters,

And draining it in mirth; For the fount was a mortal fountain And the child was a child of earth The Sun from his azure pathway Stooped unto the waters low, And wove with its snowy spray-wreaths

A beautiful Iris-Bow-While flowers grew up by the fountain Of every radiant hue, Which the infant gathered gaily, And up to the rainbow threw

liang wing an ever vainly

He looked to see them there.

But saw them fall to the waters Or lodge in his sunny hair And the happy one was blest

As Merriment was near him, Or left him unto rest; But a cloud came over the sunlight And the Iris-Bow was dim, And the voice of the darkened formtain

Became a pens've hymn. Then the infant's eyes grew teurful And he laid his wearled head On the tufted emerald margin That oft had been his bed-And looking through tears above him

He caught through the parted cloud A glimpse of the brilliant rainbow and beneath it an infant crowd, Who around a throne were gathered Each bowing its little head, And receiving its crown of blessing From a Hand that once had bied.

Sweet streams of music floated From the anthem which they sung An anthem they were learning In a new celestial tongue. And longed to fice away, But a sliver cord was round him,

Then with his efforts weary, No more be longed to drink, And his golden bowl had fallen Over the water's brink-By the troubled waves 'twas broken And sunk in the sighing deep, As the child, still upward gazing, Had gone to his final sleep;

For an Angel came from Glory,

THE PHONETIC SYSTEM.

To sever the silver nord,

Still binding him to clay

#### And bear the infant sleeper To the bosom of his Lord. S. E. G.

CINCINNATI, March 20, 1850.

To the Editor of the National Era: Your reviewer in noticing "Komstok's Fonetik Testament," raises three objections to Phonetic reform. If the crowded state of your columns will admit of it, I wish, briefly, to notice those objections. First, it is objected, "that for ordinary use, people who read must learn the common character at any rate for a century or themselves with two alphabets instead of one."
To this I would say, that numerous experiments have satisfied the advocates of Phonetic reform, that to learn the old system, by far the easiest method is, first to learn the new, after which, the common spelling can be read without further instruction. The Ohio State Teacher's Association, held in Columbus, December 26th and 27th, 1849, unanimously passed the following

Whereas the subject of Phonetic Spelling attracting much attention from the general pulic, and whereas the friends of the Spelling R. lio, and whereas the friends of the Spering Re-form claim that children can be taught to read by the Phonetic system in one-eighth of the time now required; and that after acquiring the art of read-ing the new system, they can also, without further

ing the new system, they can also, human farminatraction, read the common spelling; therefore, "Resolved, That this Convention recommend to school teachers and school trustees the propriety of testing for themselves, by actual experiments in school, the value of the Phonetic system."
And it is in this that our stronghold lies. us once convince teachers and managers of schools that to learn the new system is not to "cumber" the mind of the pupil with useless learning but that, if no other use is subserved, the pupil s enabled more easily to acquire the new and th old systems together than he is to acquire the old system without the aid of the new, and the reform

is accomplished.

The other objections are, our strong attachment to the old orthography, through the "force of association with the actual appearance of familiar words;" and "the fact that their proposed system is not the written English tongue, but a device of modern ingenuity."

It is true that it is natural for us to love things It is true that it is natural for us to love things that have become familiarized to us by old acquaintance. Yet, in the world's progress, we are compelled sometimes to acknowledge that our old atachments have been misplaced; and, learning judgment from the past, we look upon new things, as they present themselves, as involving something more than the question whether they will

as they present themselves, as involving some-thing more than the question whether they will interfere with the theories, notions, or formulas of this generation, but the questions arise, what are to be its effects upon the progress of the age? Are the means of moral and intellectual improve-ment to be augmented by them? Are men to be made more free, and enlightened, and happy, through its means? Such questions are involved in a consideration of the merits of this reform. But space does not allow me to discuss them fur-ther here. As to the relative merits of Koms Pitman's alphabets, I think that, although the former may be more pleasing to the eye of the Greek scholar, yet the fact that the latter more

resembles our old spelling, is a stronger argument in us favor. F. G. ADAMS.

OBITUARY.

On the morning of the 6th inst., at the residence of her father, in Clark county, Ohio, Miss Mary Ann Swayne sweetly fell asleep in Jesus.

Gifted with a mind of no ordinary cast, Miss Swayne was untirieg in the acquisition of those treasures which adorn, and polish, and refine the intellect; her matured judgment enabled her to cull and garner the gems of literature, while her chastened taste led her to reject all that was ephemeral and enervating. Naturally reserved and retiring in her general intercourse with the world around her, she was sometimes deemed cold—nay, proud—by those who knew her not; but around the paternal hearthstone, or in the social circle of endeared friends, she unbosomed the treasured hoard of her young heart's deep affections; and none who have witnessed her untiring and unselfish devotion in the family circle, or have listened to her chaste and beautiful expression of sentiment, that did honor alike to On the morning of the 6th inst., at the residence expression of sentiment, that did honor alike to intellect and feeling, but will treasure the remembrance as gems, to stud with pure radiance the

Truly we may apply this (oft misquoted) ex-ression to our dear young friend: "She was ovely in life, and lovelier still in death." lovely in life, and lovelier still in death."

Her disease was that insidious, slow-wasting agent of the grim Destoyer, Consumption; and, while passing through the furnace of affiction, she was indeed purified, until the image of the great Refiner was beautifully and clearly reflected in her whole demeanor.

With a sweet and childlike confidence in the precious promises of inspiration—with faith that

With a sweet and childlike confidence in the precious promises of inspiration—with faith that could pieroe the boundaries of the spirit land, and claim a home among the throng of the redeemed—with patience that no suffering could diminish—with resignation that sweetly quelled every murmur, even in thought—and with chastened hope with resignation that sweetly quelled every mur-mur, even in thought—and with chastened hope that looks beyond the grave for deathless fruition, she calmly surveyed the swelling waves of Jor-dan, for she f-lt that the white-robed Angel of Peace had calmed the oft-turbulent billows, and men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; she calmly surveyed the swelling that among them are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happinesa."

As to my taking an active part in "organizing has to my taking an active part in "organizing has a langer of cooperation," the state of my health has a plan of cooperation, the state of my health has a plan of cooperation, the state of my health has a plan of cooperation, the state of my health has a plan of cooperation, the state of my health has a plan of cooperation, the state of my health has a plan of cooperation, the state of my health has a plan of cooperation, the state of my health has a plan of cooperation, the state of my health has a plan of cooperation, the state of my health has a plan of cooperation, the state of my health has a plan of cooperation, the state of my health has a plan of cooperation.

# THIRTY-FIRST CONGRESS - FIRST SESSION.

SENATE. WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10, 1850.

Mr. Wales of Delaware presented the petition of citizens of that State against the admission of slavery into the Territories. Mr. Hale presented anti-slavery petitions as

Three from Medina county, Ohio; one from Beaver county, Pennsylvania; one from Berkshire, Vermont; from Hudson, New Hampshire; Ellington, New York; Cranston, Rhode Island; from Maine; from Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and New York; from Portage county, Ohio,

Mr. Hale was interrupted by Messrs. Clay and The former wished to know whether the peti-tions were printed or in manuscript.

The latter suggested that, to save time, it would be better to send them all to the Secretary of the

Senate, who could make the usual disposition of Mr. Hale replied to Mr. Clay, that the signa

tures of the petitions were in writing; the heading, some in print, some in manuscript. In reply to the suggestion of Mr. Atchison, he The Senator is altogether mistaken with regard to my occupying time here every morning. Instead of doing so, I determined long ugo to lay them by

as they came to me, and to come here with these politions but once a month, and then make a general delivery. [Laughter.] -Mr. Clay. I cannot allow this occasion to pass without calling to the attention of the Senate a fact connected with most of these petitions. Sir, the moment a prospect opens in this unhappy country of settling our differences, these disturbers of the peace, these abolitionists, put themselves in motion—the Jays, the Phillipses, and others in other quarters—and they establish a concerted and ramified plan of operations, and I want to exnose it to the Senate. Here, sir, is a little bit of printed paper [holding up the petition which had been delivered to him] scattered throughout the whole country. Some of them found their way into my own State. I presented them the other day from Lewis county, printed, I have no doubt, at a common centre, and dispersed throughout the country, in order to produce a common effect, and to make an impression on this body, as if they were speaking the public sentiment in this coun-

try.
The Chair informed Mr. Clay that the petitions had been disposed of.

"But I have one in my hand," said Mr. Clay. Mr. Hale called the Senator from Kentucky to The Vice President. The Senator is called to order. He will take his seat till the point of order Mr. Clay. State your point of order, sir, and

talk, either before or behind. Mr. Clay. Well, go on; no man speaks louder Mr. Hale. I rise to a point of order. I am addressing the Chair. I will not submit to inter-

Mr. Mangum, I rise to a point of order. The Senator from New Hampshire has no right to proceed with his remarks unless he reduces his point of order to writing.

Mr. Clay. If gentlemen will have a litte pae no need for t

these petitions and refer them to a committee.

The Vice President. The Chair is appealed to
on a point of order. The Senator from New
Hampshire will state what it is.

Mr. Hale. The point of order I was about to
state is this: The Chair had ruled that these petitions and the honora-

passed upon and disposed of; and it did not, therefore, come into his hands without being disposed of. That is the point of order.

Mr. Clay inquired whether he might not proceed with his observations, and then conclude

with a motion.

The Chair replied that the motion, he thought should precede the remarks.

After some commotion, Mr. Clay proceeded—
Sir, of all the bitterest enemies toward the unfortunate negro race, there are none to compare with these abolitionists, the pretended friends of theirs; but who, like the Siamese twins, connect themselves with the negro; or, like thecentaur of old, mount not the back of a horse, but the back old, mount not the back of a horse, but the back of the negro, to slide themselves into power, and in order to display a friendship they feel only for themselves, and not for the negro race. No, sir, there are not worse enemies in the country of the negro race than these ultra abolitionists. To what sorts of extremity have they not driven the alayse. sorts of extremity have they not driven the slave-holding States in defence of their own rights, and

in guarding against those excesses to which they nave a constant tendency.

Now, sir, I have said all that I intended to say Now, sir, I have said all that I intended to say. I have some of these petitions, which I wish had been presented to some other person as the medium of communication to the Senate; but they shall not deceive me by this attempt to create a false impression as to the real state of feeling throughout the country. I will make the motion, if the gentleman insists, to take up these petitions; I have a right to do it, though I have no desire to do it.

Mr. Hale. I wish to take occasion to make single remark, as allusion was made to me by the honorable Senator from Kentucky. He counselled me to a good deal of patience. Now, I thought, sir, if I had been old enough to advise that Sena-tor, that he stood in need of it before I did, and

tor, that he stood in need of it before I did, and more than I did.

I thought the manner of the Senator in speaking to me, after I had the floor, and while I had the floor—flowever our situations may differ, however humble I may be as an individual—it hought that the manner of the honorable Senator did not accord with the equality of rights that gentlemen have here on this floor. I am not arrogant nor presuming; I desire in the humble sphere of my luty to do it; and, sir, I need not tell the Senator duty to do it; and, sir, I need not tell the Senator that I shall do it; and that no insinuations, no threats, no talk, loud or low, coming from any quarter, under any circumstances, will deter me from it. I have but one light to golde me, the light of my own conscience, to walk in the path of my duty. There I must go, and no exhibitions of any sort, coming from any quarter, at any time, will have the least influence upon me at all.

[Mr. Rusk here rose, and raised the question of reception on a petition, for the purpose of calling the attention of the Senate to a petition presented the day before, and received without notice. The petition purported to come from a citizen of Ontario county, New York, and is signed, we have been informed, by names in the same handwriting. It sets forth that, under the Constitution, the burdens and obligations of the States were equal, but that in the enrolment of the militia unjust discrimination was made, by which three millions of the population of the South were exempt from enrolment and military duty, while in the North, the whole of its population was burdened in this way. The petitioners prayed, therefore, for the passage of a law, by which the militia of all the States might be enrolled, without distinction of color, class, or condition. Mr. Seward had presented the petition Meantime, some mischievous reporter (and reporters are often amused with the extreme sensitiveness of the Senatorial body) brought the matter to the notice of a Senator from the South, and this morning a scene was the result.

most solemn manner, and closed his reflections in a manner as impressive as he could make it, as follows: I hope, I pray of God, that these things may cease. I appeal to those who agitate them; and if I thought I could be heard among their constituents, I would call upon the freemen of the North to rise up and at once rebuke this sectional feeling, which must, if it go on, end in making us

Mr. Rusk of Texas was wonderfully excited,

and he made a speech, which will attest to all

true-hearted Texaus his vigilance, his bravery.

his patriotism. He treated the petition in the

dominating trait in the character of her, "not lost, but gone before," was purity of heart and life; and may her mantle, woven in the beauty of holiness, descend with its hallowing charm upon her young compeers, for the goal she has so early, so happily won!

E. F. W.

CONGRESS.

the bitterest of enemies. If, sir, upon my return from my seat, I should find my house in ashes, my wife and children massacred, though I have not much bravery—none to boast of; I trust I have not much bravery—none to boast of; I trust I have enough, however, always to conduct myself properly with all mankind—would feel that I had disgraced the name of man if I did not consider the incendiary villain that had stirred up such mischief in my domestic circle as my enemy.

And if I did not, as long as a drop of blood dominating trait in the character of her, "not the bitterest of enemies. If, sir, upon my return And if I did not, as long as a drop of blood coursed in this good right arm, treat him as such, I should consider, sir, that I had degraded the

form of man. The petition was read—the venerable men of the Senate grew solemn. Mr. Butler of South

Carolina rose with emotion. He said :1 My friend from Texas says, God grant that the progress of this thing may be arrested; but, Mr President, I am afraid I utter a truth when I say that that progress is not destined to be arrested. Sir, two of the most distinguished Senators on this floor have exerted their voices and their in fluence to arrest it; and what has been the consequence? It has brought down upon the Nester of the Senate, as the Senator from Kentucky of the Senate, as the Senator from Kentucky [Mr. Clay] is sometimes termed, a systematic attack from different quarters. And what has been the fate of the distinguished Senator from Massachusetts? [Mr. Webster.] Why, public meetings have been held, and he has been denounced in every form; and for what? For avowing the broad duty of good fuith in compliance with trea-

ties and the compromises of the Constitution.

Mr. Foote. I must confess that I am not so much excited on this occasion as several of my beloved friends here, or as I have been myself upon several former occasions. I rather think sir, that the action which has been commented upon-the introduction of certain petitions here and the agitation kept up in connection there with—is simply a part of the policy of a certain class of policicians in the North, with the view to the cultivation (as we have heretofore had very broadly admitted before us) of a sort of local popularity, with a view to their own personal ad-vancement. I do not believe, indeed I feel assured to the contrary, that in the States of the North there is such a condition of public sentiment as will justify the movements of certain persons, here and elsewhere, upon the questions referred to. Nor has anything which curred this morning induced me to believe that the Union is in greater danger to-day than it was on yesterday, or the day before yesterday. The old saying is that the dickest period of the night is just before day; and I trust, sir, that the morning of our deliverance is now dawning upon us, and that the period of darkness and gloom has well nigh terminated.

[In allusion to Mr. Seward, who presented the petition, and who, it is thought, has some influence in nominations for office, Mr. Foote announed his purpose hereafter to vote against all nominations in which he had reason to believe were concerned any gentlemen who should pre-

sent such petitions in the Senate. After further conversation, Mr. Clay felt called upon to come to the rescue of the Union, put in

jeopardy by this paper missile.] Mr. Clay. I will move, then, to take up the petition on the subject of the enrolment of the will answer it. State your point of order. Mr. Hale. I am not to be disturbed by any loud slaves of this country in the militia, for the purpose of this country in the minuta, for the pur-pose of making a motion, and, without further argument upon the subject, invite the Senate to act upon it; expressing a hope, and I shall call for the yeas and nays for that purpose, that this petition will be rejected by the decisive and in-dignant and unanimous vote of the whole body. move you, sir, to take up the petition, and I will

then move to reject the prayer of the petition, and call for the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered. Mr. Seward in a brief way stated his position. He believed the right of petition inherent, and felt it his duty to present whatever petitions were intrusted to

I defend and vindicate those which I rise in my place to defend and vindicate, and I leave without vindication or defence, and for future consideration, those which I present without vin-dication or defence. This is my rule of action. Other Senators have a different rule. They think they have a right, and that they are bound titions had all been passed upon, and the honorable Senator from Kentucky says he has one of them in his hand. I suppose the petition he has in his hand is one which I sent to the Chair, and was will not. I do not impugn their motives; I do will not. I do not impugn their motives; I do not assail them in the least. I should have lived to but little purpose, Mr. President, as long as I have lived, if I had not learned from my own infirmitles the obligations of justice and charity to the motives of others. I shall not shrink from the performance of what is my duty, under any circumstances of censure. I go a little further in

explanation, because I shall vote for receiving this petition. I shall vote against the resolution to reject it.

Mr. Clay, (in his seat.) The motion is to re ject the PRAYER of the petition.

Mr. Seward. I thank the honorable Senator from Kentucky for the information. I under-stood it to be a motion to reject the petition itself

and in all countries; but, as I have said before, I am in favor of obtaining that object only by peaceful, lawful, and constitutional means; and where the Constitution interdicts, there I stop. To receive this petition and reject its prayer, as one that ought not to be granted, is in exact accordance with the course I have before proposed in regard to petitions for a dissolution of the Union It belongs to the States where slavery exists, to abolish it there. To arm and organize the slaves would be a means of violence to effect emancipation unconstitutionally, in violation of State rights.

State rights.

And now, whatever may be intended for me here or elsewhere, I beg honorable Senators to understand this as the rule of my conduct for the future. I shall never assail the motives of any member of this body. I shall never defend mymember of this body. I shall never defend myself against any imputation of motives made
against me. If such imputations are made, in
whatever shape they may come, as they have done
in various shapes here, I shall pass them by in
silence. They will not in the least disturb my
equanimity.

Mr. Clay. I rise to say a single word, and that
is to average a hone that there will be no further

is, to express a hope that there will be no further discussion, but that the vote will be taken and taken in the manner I have suggested, with a taken in the manner I have suggested, with a solemnity and unanimity which, I am sure, will have a good effect. The petition, be it remembered, has been received. There can therefore be no repreach against the Senate for not receiving it. The question now is, shall its prayer be granted? And that prayer is to do what no man can conceive or dream of without horror and dismay. The proposition is to embody every slave in the United States in the militia of the United States in the militia of the United States in the militia of the United States. States. Sir, I trust honorable Senators are pre-pared to vote upon this question. The Senator who sits near me [Mr. Seward] has, in a very calm, orderly manner, expressed his views. Though we may not agree with him, let us say nothing more, but go to the vote, and vote, by a singular instance of unanimity and decision, against the abominable prayer of the petition.

The motion was put from the Chair, and the year and nays having been taken, resulted as fol-

YEAN—Messrs. Atchison, Badger, Bell, Benton, Borland, Bradbury, Bright, Butler, Chase, Clarke, Clay, Cooper, Corwin, Davis of Massachusetts, Dayton, Dickinson, Dodge of Iowa, Dodge, of Wisconsin, Douglas, Felch, Foote, Greene, Hale, Hamlin, Hunter, Jones, King, Mangum, Mason, Miller, Morton, Norris, Pearce, Phelps, Rusk, Sebastian, Seward, Shields, Smith, Soule, Spruance, Turney, Underwood, Wales, Walker, Webster, Whitcomb, and Yulee—48.

NAYS-None. So the motion was unanimously adopted. [One cannot but smile at the excessive ner vousness of the Senatorial body. Some people, we fear, have found out the peculiar infirmity of

certain of its members, and take mischievous pleasure in quizzing them. Mr. Butler must have been sorely disappointed at the unanimous tle more "attrition" might have suited him better. As for Mr. Clay, he walked with a prouder step, after having succeeded in marshalling the indignation, the dignity, and the stern resolves of the Senate to the utter discomfiture of Ontario

county, New York. While we cannot help regarding these exhibi tions in the Senate as unbecoming its position, we do hope that the exercise of the right of pe tition may be exercised in such a way as shall not impair its sacredness or efficiency for good.] The Senate then proceeded to the cons